

# Press Release

## NEVADA ANNOUNCES ITS MEMBERSHIP IN 31-STATE ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM

*SMARTER Balanced is competing for a grant of up to \$160 million to develop a student assessment system aligned with the common core academic standards*

**CARSON CITY, NV. FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, June 23, 2010 –**

A 31-state consortium, which includes Nevada, today submitted its application for a federal grant that would develop a student assessment system aligned to a common core of academic standards.

The [SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium](#), or SBAC, formed in December 2009, hopes to receive a Race to the Top assessment grant from the US Department of Education. The grant, which lasts four years, is worth as much as \$160 million. No more than two grants will be awarded.

**Earlier this month, Governor Jim Gibbons, State Superintendent Keith Rheault and State Board President Chris Wallace signed an agreement to have Nevada become a member state of the consortium.**

The assessment system to be developed by SBAC is tied to the [Common Core Standards](#), an initiative led by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association to create a consistent and clear set of learning standards for K-12 in English language arts and mathematics that all states can use. By the end of 2011, states in the consortium must agree to adopt the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and math. States still in the consortium in 2014-15 must agree

### **SMARTER Balanced States**

States are: (as of June 17):

Alabama	Colorado
Connecticut	Delaware
Georgia	Hawaii
Idaho	Iowa
Kansas	Kentucky
Maine	Michigan
Missouri	Montana
Nevada	New Hampshire
New Jersey	New Mexico
North Carolina	North Dakota
Ohio	Oklahoma
Oregon	Pennsylvania
South Carolina	South Dakota
Utah	Vermont
Washington	West Virginia
Wisconsin	

For Immediate Release, June 23, 2010

to use the consortium's tests as their accountability assessments.

The SBAC tests will measure the full range of the common core standards in grades 3-8 and 11, including assessing problem solving and complex thinking skills. Teachers in participating states will be involved at all stages of item and test development, including writing, scoring and the design of reporting systems. Educators will also be able to access a reporting system that identifies each student's strengths, weakness and progress toward college and career readiness.

SBAC will create state-of-the-art adaptive online exams, using "open source" technology. The online system will provide accurate assessment information to teachers and others on the progress of all students, including those with disabilities, English language learners and low- and high-performing students. The system will include:

- 1) the required summative exams (offered twice each school year);
- 2) optional formative, or benchmark, exams; and
- 3) a variety of tools, processes and practices for teachers to use in planning and implementing informal, ongoing assessment. This will assist teachers in understanding what students are and are not learning on a daily basis so they can adjust instruction accordingly.

SBAC's goal – to ensure that all students leaving high school are college and career ready – will be achieved with the high-quality assessment system to be created by the consortium. The system will include rigorous, internationally benchmarked tests that report on how each student has been progressing toward and is currently performing on a pathway to career and college readiness.

The test scores will be able to be used for improved educator accountability and to help identify professional development needs of teachers and principals.

The U.S. Department of Education is expected to announce its awards in September 2010. States in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium will share many of the operational costs of the assessment system.

Learn more about the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER>.

-END-